




County of Los Angeles
Department of Public Social Services

Bryce Yokomizo
Director

December 16, 2002

TO: Each Supervisor

FROM: 
Bryce Yokomizo, Director

**SUBJECT: ELECTRONIC BENEFITS TRANSFER (EBT) CASH ACCESS PLAN –
UPDATE (SYNOPSIS #92)**

On January 8, 2002, your Board instructed the Department of Public Social Services (DPSS) to evaluate the viability of using the State's Electronic Benefits Transfer (EBT) system to issue cash benefits for the Los Angeles County participants. At the same time, DPSS is in the planning process for the implementation of EBT for Food Stamp benefits, which is mandatory under State law. This memo provides your Board with the third update of our progress.

EBT Food Stamps

- In February 2003, the State will begin its recruitment of the 6,032 Food and Nutrition Service (FNS) retailers in Los Angeles County. Recruitment activities will consist of mailers, community outreach, training, site visits, and other proactive activities to increase enrollment.
- All implementation activities, including both LEADER changes and implementation planning, are proceeding on schedule for an August 2003 pilot.

EBT Cash Benefits

- The State reports that Alameda and Yolo County EBT pilots are going very well. The State is scheduled to publish the results of the pilot evaluation next month.
- We continue to work with interested advocate groups to develop criteria for evaluation of the Cash Access Plan (CAP).
- On September 30, 2002, we received the first iteration of the CAP. We expect to receive the next version this week.

- The CAP Template is being reviewed by local community groups and district offices to aid in identifying possible leads on vendors to participate in EBT cash.
- During January 2003, DPSS will conduct public EBT Forums throughout the County to allow participants a vehicle to provide input on the CAP and to aid with the transition to EBT Food Stamps. The forums will be conducted in English, Spanish and the next two predominate languages for each Supervisorial District. We are working with homeless advocates to identify areas for the homeless community forums. Over 40 forums have been planned throughout the County and each forum will include:
 - A brief presentation on EBT Food Stamps and Cash (including the option of Direct Deposit);
 - The State's EBT training video (available in each of the designated forum languages);
 - A Questions & Answers session; and
 - An opportunity for the public to provide input on the CAP through a survey form that will be available. The results of this survey will be included in our final recommendation to the Board.
- The State and homeless advocates are working together to identify and encourage hotels that serve the homeless population to install Point of Sale (POS) devices. The POS devices can be used by participants to pay rent electronically. The response thus far has been very positive.

DPSS will continue to provide bi-monthly updates of our EBT efforts to ensure the successful implementation of EBT for all of our participants.

BY:sk

c: Executive Officer, Board of Supervisors
Chief Administrative Officer
Chief Information Officer
County Counsel
Auditor-Controller